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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/582,700	08/21/2000	Jacobus Theodorus Marais	23800	6863

7590

01/22/2004

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EXAMINER

BUMGARNER, MELBA N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3732

DATE MAILED: 01/22/2004

22

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/582,700

Applicant(s)

MARAIS, JACOBUS THEODORUS

Examiner

Melba Bumgarner

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 November 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 3-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 3-7, 9 and 10 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "characterized in that", should be avoided, and phrases which can be implied, such as "The disclosure concerns," "The invention relates to", etc. should be avoided. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Objections

2. Claims 4, 8, and 9 are objected to because of the following informalities: In claim 4, line 8 "includes" should be changed to --produces-- or similar term and line 12, delete "and"; in claim 8, line 9 after "cathodic" insert --chamber--; and in claim 9, line 8 "includes separable and both of" should be changed similarly and line 14 "solution" should read --solutions--. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

4. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim contains subject matter, which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The specification does not describe the an irrigating medium

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1) comprising a substantially chlorine-free electro-chemically activated, aqueous saline solution and 2) having properties modulated by separate and independent recirculation of the predominantly anion-containing solution and/or the predominantly cation-containing solution through a counter-electrode chamber. Also the specification does not describe the electro-chemical reactor having a cylindrical through-flow, electro-chemical cell.

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is unclear what is meant by "a substantially chlorine-free electro-chemically activated, aqueous saline solution" when the specification defines the salt as sodium chloride or potassium chloride. It is questioned whether the above "solution" should be —solutions— as described on page 5 of the Remarks.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless —

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

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8. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Malchesky. Malchesky discloses an irrigating medium comprising an electro-chemically activated, aqueous saline solution which includes both an aqueous predominantly anion-containing solution and a separate aqueous predominantly cation-containing solution having microcidal as well as dispersing and surfactant properties (column 2 lines 10-18). Patentable weight is not given to the limitations containing new matter as described in paragraph 4. Patentable weight is not given to the recitation in the preamble "[a] root canal irrigating medium" because it has been held that a preamble is denied the effect of a limitation where the claim is drawn to a structure and the portion of the claim following the preamble is a self-contained description of the structure not depending for completeness upon the introductory clause, *Kropa v. Robie*, 88 USPQ 478 (CCPA 1951). The process and intermediate products used in the process by which the medium is made, i.e. "it is electrochemically activated in an electro-chemical reactor . . . ", are not given patentable weight, because a product claim is properly met if the final product is shown regardless of the process used.

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 3-7, 9, and 10 are allowed. As allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant's reply must either comply with all formal requirements or specifically traverse each requirement not complied with. See 37 CFR 1.111(b) and MPEP § 707.07(a).

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Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments filed November 4, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The prior art shows the claimed limitations of claim 8.

Patentable weight was not given to the new matter, the limitation in the preamble, and the process by which the product is made as described in paragraph 8, which the applicant used in his arguments.

Conclusion

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melba Bumgarner whose telephone number is 703-305-0740. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kevin Shaver can be reached on (703) 308-2582. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0858.



Melba Bumgarner
Patent Examiner